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Bi-weekly Report

Kyrgyzstan

USAID Facilitates Constitutional Debate in the Kyrgyz Republic

USAID's implementing partners have been actively supporting the on-going public debate in preparation for a national referendum on the Kyrgyz Constitution that is expected to take place at the end of the year. The referendum will decide on a presidential, parliamentary, or mixed form of government for the Kyrgyz Republic, based on Constitution drafts that are being developed by a Presidential Working Group. To educate public about the drafts, recently the National Democratic Institute conducted a series of Presidential Working Group forums and published the three drafts for public dissemination. The International Foundation for Election Systems prepared an analysis of the drafts and presented it at a seminar to a broad spectrum of Kyrgyzstan's political parties. Meanwhile, the International Republican Institute held a constitutional seminar for media representatives and political parties.



Later this year, Kyrgyz citizen will vote on their new constitution.
Photo: USAID

USAID-funded TV Program Rated Second Most Popular on the Kyrgyz National Television

A survey conducted by the National TV and Radio Company rated the TV program "Demilge in Action" the second most popular TV program in Kyrgyzstan in 2005, and its author received the Journalist of the Year award. "Demilge in Action" was created by the USAID Land Reform and Market Development Project to educate viewers about land legislation, consult on rights and obligations of landowners, and demonstrate real-life solutions for land-related disputes. On average, six programs are broadcast each month, and the audience is rapidly expanding.



Recently, the TV program "Demilge in Action" presented to its viewers a new USAID publication about model contracts for land transactions.
Photo: USAID's Land Reform Project

Starting in 2003, the USAID Land Reform Project established a network of 45 *demilgechi*, or volunteer rural activists, in 82 villages countrywide to inform rural population about their land-related rights and to help resolve land problems. Through 2005, *demilgechi* provided 26,000 consultations to rural citizens who faced with conflicts, and nearly 95% of these cases have been successfully resolved without court proceedings. As the policy and legal framework evolves, USAID's project continues to train *demilgechi* on land issues, covers limited expenses of *demilgechi*, and provides written land rights materials for distribution to rural citizens.

Tajikistan

USAID Helps Form Water Committees

In the first weeks of July, a series of meetings on how to form water committees and manage water systems were conducted in Jarbulak, Kalam, and Navbunyod - three Asht District, Sughd Oblast communities that have completed or are currently implementing water projects with support from the USAID Peaceful Communities Initiatives Project. The meetings were organized by community



USAID helps to set up water committees to manage this precious resource for Tajikistan's largely irrigated agricultural sector.
Photo: USAID

initiative group leaders, and active residents from each community were invited to participate. “Water committees will be responsible for collecting money for annual repairs of water projects, and they also will keep an eye on the condition of the water projects,” said Jarbulak community initiative group member Shodikul Abdulamitov. Through water committees, active community residents will ensure the sustainability of the infrastructure projects. To support the effective functioning of the water committees, the Peaceful Communities Initiatives Project will conduct a follow-up training in August on the theme of infrastructure management for the newly formed water committees.

The Peaceful Communities Initiatives Project is implemented by Mercy Corps.

Uzbekistan

A USAID-supported TV Documentary Educates Uzbeks about the Risks of Drug Use

On July 4, the popular Uzbek TV channel “Yoshlar” (Youth) held a premier broadcast of the documentary film “A Fine Line.” The documentary was produced by the National Movie Company Uzbekkino with financial support from the USAID Drug Demand Reduction Program and the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation. Through real-life stories about people that are addicted to drugs, the film aims to increase public awareness of the health and social risks of drug use in Uzbekistan. The unique documentary features persons with heroin addiction, including some who contracted HIV through drug use. The story line calls upon viewers to treat HIV-infected and drug addicts not as outsiders, but as people who need assistance and support. The film also highlights work - including programs funded by USAID - that is being done to assist with this serious problem.

The video and a DVD version of “A Fine Line” is being distributed among state and public organizations involved in the drug abuse and HIV/AIDS prevention work in Uzbekistan.



The documentary demonstrated how doctors in a USAID-supported Uzbek medical facility tested blood for HIV as part of the HIV prevention program.
Photo: DDRP/ Uzbekkino